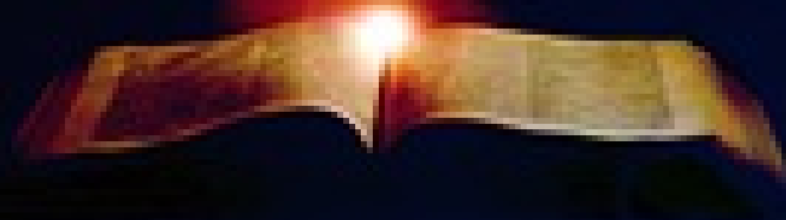


# IN SEARCH OF TRUTH



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بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

# In Search of Truth

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# In Search of Truth

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## Introduction

Sarah, a Christian, was in her third year of college studying for a degree in engineering. She has accepted a proposal of marriage from Mohsen, a classmate who, though Muslim, does not know anything about Islam. In order to ensure that they have a happy life together, Sarah decided to embrace Islam. Mohsen tells this :story

## Chapter One

As soon as we decided to marry, we found an alim to help Sarah become a Muslim. One afternoon, we went to his house and on the way, I imagined that he was an old man with white hair and a wrinkled face. We both thought that we wouldn't "!understand his sermons. Sarah told me, "You must understand what he tells us

.Why?" I asked"

.Because you are a Muslim, too", she replied"

."I answered dryly, "Oh yes, I am a Muslim

"!When we reached his home, Sarah confided in me, "I'm scared

I myself was a bit afraid of the important step that we were about to take. It was the first time I had ever spoken with a religious man. I feared that he would label me as a deviated young man. My friends had often warned me about these religious men who .oppose everything-youth, beauty, education and wealth

Because they do not enjoy

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such privileges, my friends told me that they behave oddly. My head was filled with these pessimistic ideas, yet I told Sarah, "Why be afraid? This is a very routine affair; ."within a few minutes you will become a Muslim, the same as I am

.How did you become Muslim?" Sarah asked"

" .I didn't become one-I am Muslim due to inheritance"

I smiled, saying, "What I mean, is that I was born in a Muslim family, hence I am a ".Muslim

".Sarah said thoughtfully, "It seems that you do not really know why you are a Muslim

I knocked at the door, which was opened by a young child who led us to a room where the alim was. I was very surprised to see that he was young and healthy looking. He welcomed us politely and I began to feel at ease. I looked at Sarah and could see that .she was no longer nervous or afraid

I told him the aim of our visit and that I wanted him to teach Sarah the Shahada .{({testimony of God's Oneness and of the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW

He quietly told me, "But that is not sufficient, my son". I was surprised to hear him .address me thus, since he was only a few years older than me

.What else do we need to do?" I asked"

He remained silent for a moment. I appreciated the silence, because I dislike those

who attempt to fill every space with words, yet I was anxious for us to achieve our aim, so

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"?I said, " Well

He smiled and said, "I want to help you, but as a religious man, I cannot offer Islam in ".the form of mere words. I have an obligation towards my religion

I told him that it was a private matter and that he didn't have any responsibility towards us. He sighed and said, "I am not responsible for people, but I have a great responsibility towards Almighty Allah and towards Islam. Do you think religious men are free to act as they wish? As a matter of fact, an alim has a serious duty. It is not ".easy to carry such a burden

”?His words affected me and I asked, "What do you expect of us

I do not expect anything of you. You want me to witness the repetition of a few" words, but I will not agree to this unless Sarah becomes acquainted with Islam and ".understands its precepts

At this point, I realized how serious he was and how tolerant. Still, I thought that it was best to do it my way, because I thought Sarah would not be able to comprehend Islamic concepts, since I myself did not. Sarah understood my intentions and told me, "Do not insist any longer. I appreciate his devotion to his duties, and I think we should listen to him. If I can understand my philosophy courses, why can't I understand "?Islam

I turned to the alim and, feeling a bit embarrassed, said, "We want you to do what is right, and we

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".will pay you for your time

He shook his head and stated, "We do not barter our religion. A religious person only expects reward from Allah. We should offer our services without expecting any ".compensation

".I regretted my words, and Sarah admonished me, "You have made another mistake

".I apologize, but one hears many rumours"

Our religious instructor answered, "One should be sure of the truth and not believe everything that is said." He continued, "Man is in dire need of religion. He cannot live ".without it

.Why not?" I asked"

Human nature is such that man seeks ease and comfort, which cannot be obtained" except through happiness. And happiness cannot be found unless it encompasses all aspects of life. Religion is the only system which offers happiness and satisfaction, ".and abounds with ideals and educational values

I said, "Are you saying that nothing can be substituted for religion? But don't you believe that scientific progress can take the place of religion and provide man with a "?comfortable life

No, my son. Even if man replaces religion with science and seeks happiness in it, he" will not be able to appreciate the true meaning of happiness. Scientific progress and technology may provide man with material comfort. Man can travel far distances in a matter of hours, listen to foreign broadcasts, view the surface of the moon on television while sitting in his living room. Yet man cannot truly experience happiness, .since he cannot put an end to injustice and oppression, which human nature opposes

He cannot uproot his"

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inner instincts of hating hypocrisy, aggression and the exploitation of the weak by the strong. He is powerless to end the world's insane race for wealth and power.

Everything science offers man is controlled by two factors: good and evil. Man can direct scientific progress according to his desires-a plane, for example, is a device for a comfortable journey, yet it can also be the means of great destruction. Television is .a useful means of information, yet it also spreads indecency and corruption in society

Explosives are used to build roads, but they also maim and kill innocent people. Thus," man is constantly struggling between what he likes and dislikes. There is no happiness ".in such a life

I objected, "Can't an ideal morality replace religion? I mean to say, if morality is highly ".developed and all-encompassing, then justice can be achieved in society

He replied, "Such idealism is not sufficient for a person's happiness. It is the result of an emergency situation, not a sound foundation. Compassion, for instance, is a feature of such idealism and a natural inclination in humans. Yet it must be stimulated. .A kindhearted man cannot but help a poor man he meets

Only such an incident can stir compassion in his heart. If he does not come across this poor man, his compassion will be useless and society won't benefit from it. Compassion here is just an example of idealism and social sympathy. It is not the outcome of a solid foundation. Hence, it cannot cause a

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man to feel at ease and happy; it's range is limited." While I was listening approvingly, .another question came to my mind

What do you think of mutual interests? Can this replace religion and create" happiness for man?" I asked. He said, "No, serving mutual interests alone cannot ".bring happiness

"?I asked, "Why not

He answered, "Because there are serious gaps due to the different interests of individuals. Often a person's interest conflicts with another's. One may benefit by the

loss of another. How often palaces are constructed on the ruins of others! How often towns emerge on the remnants of others! How often someone feels happy at the misfortune of others. Unhappiness won't be uprooted through any law of mutual interests. Happiness won't be fulfilled by such means. Man will still face what he does ".not like and will pursue his own comfort by all means

"?I asked, "Well, can't good breeding and enlightment achieve that for man

He answered, "This good breeding that you visualize, in turn, needs good teachers to supervise the learning process. They, in turn, need be watched and so on, along an endless chain. Breeding does not start at point zero. Zero cannot produce numbers. Hence, an individual remains with an insistent need for religion; a need which can provide all aspects of happiness and an easiness on a firm foundation that never ".changes

The alim stopped speaking and we remained silent, thinking about what he was saying. After awhile I asked, "Why have you stopped master?! Have we caused

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"?you trouble or taken too much of your time

He replied, "No, but I wanted you to have a rest and also to ponder over what you ".have heard today

I looked at Sarah, who whispered, "Oh, please ask him to continue. I am quite ".satisfied and have no objection

".I told him, "Please continue

He said, "Now you agree that a man is in need of religion, which means he is in need of Prophets and Messengers. But we should know the nature of this religion and that ".kind of message which brings man true peace

".I told him, "Yes, tell us the message of Islam

He said, "First, it must be in total harmony with human instincts but not contrary to it. Second, it must be reasonable and within the scope of a human mind's .comprehension

Third, it must present righteous values and morals with which the life of a good" individual can be constructed. It must use good examples and illustrations that will acquaint us with its very essence and aim so that we can follow its teachings. Islam ",can do this

"?I asked, "How do we know that Islam can do this

He said, "This is what I intend to explain, but it will take a long time. Can you be "?patient

Though I was in the habit of glancing often at my watch, for some time, I had forgotten to look. It was nearly ten p.m. We should have left an hour earlier in order for Sarah to enter the boarding house where she lived

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before the doors were locked. We stood up to leave and expressed the hope that we would meet again soon. Our earlier thought had completely changed, and we were .anxious to come again

As we left his house we noticed someone following us but we could not see who he .was in the darkness

Sarah was afraid that it was her cousin, who loved her and was jealous, as she had chosen to marry me. I tried to calm her as we walked hand in hand along the streets .to the boarding house, where we found the doors already closed

Sarah and I were at a loss as to what to do. Finally I said, "We must decide now. We ".can't stand here all the night. I wish we had left earlier

She answered, "We have not been wasting our time! We need to listen to the lecture. I feel that it was worth staying for. What I fear is that my cousin was the one following

".us. I am sure he will put obstacles in our way

I agreed and had the same fear. At last, I suggested that she spend the night in my small home and that I would sleep on the sofa in the living room. She agreed, and .when we reached my door, I had a feeling that someone was watching us

The next morning, while I was on my way to the lecture hall, a first-year student :handed me a sealed letter. I opened it and read

Do you think I'll'



let you enjoy life while I am brokenhearted? I will do anything to make you leave my cousin. I shall tell her family about your plans and how she spends her evenings in the '.homes of strangers and visit Muslim soothsayers

The letter upset me greatly. I found an empty corner and sat down to think. "I cannot give up my fiancée. She has become part of my life," I told myself, "Yet I may be risking her life, which I care very much about. I must find a way to keep her out of ".trouble. This cannot be achieved but by marriage

I decided that I would not tell Sarah about the letter and that I would ask the alim to perform his job sooner. I reasoned that when we become husband and wife, her family would not try to interfere. So I never told Sarah about the letter but I found her a bit disturbed that day. I tried to cheer her and told her of my plan to finish the matter .quickly

".She said doubtly, "I don't think the matter will end soon

".I said, "I'll do everything to make him finish it

She said, "No, please. Don't forget he has a responsibility for his religion and will fulfill ".his duties completely

You are right Sarah. Anyway, we will see to it. At ٥ o'clock I will be ready to"

".accompany you to his house

At five, I found her waiting at the door of the boarding house. She looked pale and .worried

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,I asked her what the matter was but she smiled and said

Nothing." Although I tried to find out why she was so worried, she wouldn't tell me," but insisted on hurrying to the alim's house. I was afraid that she had received a similar threatening letter. I tried to talk about different matters to distract her .attention

We reached the house and were soon in the alim's presence. I begged him to start and finish quickly so that we could avoid the previous day's trouble. He felt sorry and ,apologized but I said

Oh, you need not apologize, we were really interested in your lecture, but we forgot" ".to note the time

"?He said, "Without hardship, rest can't be appreciated. You do not agree

".I replied, "Perhaps

You are not sure. But haven't you ever drunk water after hours of thirst and did the" same at ordinary time? Haven't you noticed the difference? Sometimes you walk for long hours in the sunlight and you look for shade to escape the heat. Can that shade ”? be the same as that in your home

When one falls ill, deprived of movement and unable to enjoy life, and finally he" becomes well again, does he not feel more grateful for the health he had previously? ".In times of sickness, he appreciates the great treasure of health

".We listened to him attentively and I said, "It is exactly as you say

He said, "That is why sometimes hardships or troubles can actually be to our benefit. .Thank God for His bounties



".Without experiencing pain and suffering, one cannot experience true happiness

".I repeated, "Thank God

He continued, "We agree that man is in need of a religion which will suit all aspects of life and must be in harmony with human instincts and wisdom. A religion that can set examples and illustrations. Islam can do so. Islamic theory is handed down to man :through prophethood. It contains all that a human being needs. The Qur'an says

Those who believe in the unseen and keep prayer and spend out of what We have given them and who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which (was revealed before you, they are sure of the hereafter (Al-Baqara, ٢: ٣-٥

That belief in the unseen is in harmony with human nature. Despite having different" attitudes and opinions, man generally feels that there is a great might outside his limited senses. He takes refuge in it in times of hardship. He is similar to a man flying in a plane, when the pilot suddenly announces some damage that may cause the plane .to crash

He warns the passengers to get ready and to use life belts or emergency doors. Everyone tries his best to save himself. A crippled person cannot move, even though he finds himself near death, he does not give up hope. He thinks there is a merciful power somewhere that may help him. He believes in the unseen power that exceeds the power of technology or science. Until the last moment, this



".man hopes for mercy

Another example is a mother whose child is seriously ill. Doctors give up the hope of" curing him, yet the mother still hopes he will recover. She feels there is some mighty

power that can do this. This is what is meant by the belief in the Unseen, a belief that is in harmony with mankind. Another example is a captain of a ship lost in the middle ?of the ocean. How does he feel at such a time

He appeals to the unseen, highest power that is beyond his materialistic potentials. This is a real factor that man is in need of believing in the unseen. Religion is an instinct that exists among all human races, even the most primitive. Metaphysics and paranormal study, is an inner human inclination. Such an instinct is found even among children who continue to ask about such matters. A child's questions unintentionally ”.express the feeling of this unseen power that he wants to understand

This belief in the unseen is essential in religion, as it naturally leads to belief in Allah." Such belief is sometimes clear and sometimes vague, depending on explanations. Another aspect of harmony in religion with the human instinct is the unification of our ".great universe and the accurate coordination in it

I looked at my watch. Seeing that we still had some time, I said, "What do you mean "?by the coordination of the universe

,He said, "This is a lengthy discussion. I see you are in a hurry

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so we can discuss the matter in another lecture." I looked at Sarah, who agreed, "...saying, "We'd better avoid yesterday's trouble, especially since

.Especially since what?" I asked"

Oh nothing", she told me, "Please schedule our next meeting after Wednesday" ".because I have an exam on that day

I asked the alim to fix the date of our next meeting and he said he could not see us until the next Saturday afternoon. I thought about the many long days that would ,pass without achieving our goal. I begged him saying

"?Please can't you spare one or two hours before Saturday"

He said, "I am quite busy with teaching, studying and working on various questions ".raised by others

"?I said, "Can't you postpone some of your lessons

He smiled saying, "You are convinced that exam cause the delay of other matters. "?Don't you think my lessons need my thorough attention

I was ashamed and remained silent for a moment, then said, "In fact, I did not think ".that you were busy with studies

Knowledge is an ocean. One cannot reach its bottom except after long, continuous" efforts. It may take all of a man's life. When one gets some knowledge one tries other ".doors for more

"?I asked, "Oh, do you also do that

He smiled and said, "Are we a special group, different from others? We are the same as any other researcher. We study religious sciences and related things that may influence religion. One keeps on studying looking for constructive opinions or better ".ideas as long as one lives

I

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said, "Then you are not confined to the study of Halal and Haram (the allowed and the "?forbidden) matters

He said, "This is the core of our study, but this knowledge has certain dimensions that ".require the study of other matters

"?What are these dimensions"

He told me, "It is necessary for one to know about logic, linguistics, the narrations, the origins and the reasons behind Islamic precepts. One who guides others must first of

all know that Allah, the Almighty, is the source of all guidance. It needs great efforts ".and serious research and investigation

I never thought of that," I admitted. "I used to think that a religious man has less" ".trouble, less responsibility and an easier life than most

It is a pity. Such feelings are enough to create a gap between religious men and" intellectuals. Yet each one needs the other to understand and spread the message of life completely. Perhaps you will understand in the future what you have been ".ignorant of until now

".I said, "Surely, I will

".He said, "Until we meet again, I want you to read these two books about religion

.I accepted the books, and we left with the promise to meet again the following week

**Chapter Two**

The days dragged on as we anxiously waited to meet the alim again. We were afraid we might not be able to carry out our plans before matters got worse. Sarah and I .read the religious books

One day before our scheduled meeting with the religious man, I received another threatening letter

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from Sarah's cousin. It was more strongly worded than the previous one, and I spent .the night awake, deep in thought. I seriously feared a conflict

When I saw Sarah the next morning, I did not tell her about the letter because I didn't want to worry her. She was eager for that day's meeting with the religious instructor. Sarah was in a cheerful mood, and I realized that her previous uneasiness had nothing to do with her cousin. At the appointed hour, we went to our religious .instructor's home and found him resting, as he caught cold

We were going to leave, but he insisted that we stay and that he was ready to continue his lecture- "In the previous meeting, we mentioned the coordination of the universe's parts and its unity," he began. "A human being senses this unity and when he knows that he too, is part of this huge plan, he feels in perfect harmony with all that surrounds him. He then believes that there is a mighty Power ready to help him. This Power has prepared everything for man's benefit. Thus, he does not feel alienated or at loss in the great universe. He comprehends the truth and the reasons ".for this unity around him

Contrary to this feeling, when one does not understand the dimensions of relativity in" the universe, where man does not weigh a feather in comparison, he must learn that this great planet, and the sun are at his service; that the

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sun's heat is designed to ensure his survival on earth, and by this thought, he feels ".satisfied and proud

Had the sun been just a bit nearer to Earth, everything would have burnt up long ago." Had it been a bit further away, extreme cold would have destroyed every living thing. When man learns such scientific facts, he can appreciate the fact of his existence and ".his role in the world

Had night time been longer than it is, the resultant cold would have damaged or" destroyed life. This movement of the earth has been calculated to serve man. How does man feel towards the manifestation of such mighty Power? The oceans cover most of the earth; had they been deeper, then all the carbon dioxide and the oxygen on our planet would have been exhausted by water, eventually leading to lack of air. ".The depth has been determined to fit man's needs, including his safety

One may think of this planet as being made up of just stones and dirt. But if one" studies its dimensions and its geography, one will be amazed at its grandeur with regard to these huge mountains, hills and the many oceans and rivers. One can actually feel the greatness of our Maker by contemplating on the creation. This earth

.has been designed for human life. Man is in need of a certain amount of oxygen

When one looks at the gases that surround the globe, one is fascinated by the sky's blue colour in the day



and the bright stars at night. Had this layer of gases been thinner, meteors and shooting stars would have burnt through the outer layer of gases and would have fallen to the earth. Such meteors, which travel at speeds of up to ۴۰ miles per second ".can destroy everything in their path

Even the moon has been placed at a particular distance which affects life on this" planet, since the moon causes the high and low ocean tides. Had the distance been less, water would have covered the entire globe. Our air, as well, helps the sun's rays penetrate throughout the universe. Our Creator's wisdom has designed the sun's rays ".with various extents to fit life. Man is, in fact, a vital part of the universe

The religious man stopped talking. He seemed tired. Though we knew about these scientific matters, we listened to him attentively as he exposed these facts in relation .to God and Divine purpose

He continued, "Now, you can realize that man lives in harmony with nature. Believing in the unseen is not a mere instinct without a particular aim. In fact, it is important that man learns and investigates in order to reach the truth. Belief in the unseen impels .man to learn the secrets of the unseen and to study metaphysics

This instinct, which helps man to understand unity, also teaches him about his links with the great universe. When he understands that everything is designed for his welfare, is he not bound to be



grateful? Such knowledge will show him that everything is created with amazing accurateness. Man then may wonder: Since everything is arranged in order in this

huge universe, be it the smallest atom or the largest planet, and all is regulated, can man, the best and most worthy creature be left without a master plan of life? Even an ant or a bee has a regulated life. When man recalls such facts. he asks: What is the "? best order for human life

"?Then he asked, "Now, have you read the books I gave you

We both answered, "Yes" He then gave us another book and said, "I have explained this aspect of the matter for you. I stated previously that religion should be in harmony with a human being's nature and mind; however, science can also help man to progress. The religion of Islam is in thorough agreement with mental, as well as spiritual progress. There are many facts that can prove this." He started coughing and .I felt sorry for him

I said, "Please rest now. You look tired. We can wait for a few days until you get well ".again

".He smiled, saying, "But you were in quite a hurry

"!I replied, "Yes, but not if it will affect your health

".He said, "But I don't know how long it will take me to get well again

"I told him, "In two or three days, I will call to ask about your health

He said, "Then we shall decide at that time when your

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next visit will be. I hope you will finish this book in the meantime." He gave us another book about Islam

The next day I returned home early and Sarah visited me with some women friends.١ started reading the religious book after I finished my studies. It was an interesting book and I recorded some facts in my tape recorder. At about ١٠ p.m., the doorbell rang. I did not expect any visitors, and I wondered who it could be. I was annoyed, but

.thought it might be an old friend

Carrying my book and recorder I went to open the door. I wanted to show the visitor that I was quite busy. When I opened it, I saw a young girl standing surprised at seeing me and said, "Oh, I am sorry. I have made a mistake again." I asked her, "Who "?are you looking for

She replied, "Oh, I am a stranger in this city and I was given this address, but I have knocked on all the doors here and yours is the last one. I think I have been given a ".wrong address. Oh, what shall I do?" I said, "Let me see the address

It is this street and the house is nearby." She started crying and asked, "Where shall" "?I go? Am I to spend the night in the street

I saw that she was young and pretty. I feared she might fall into the clutches of some wicked person, yet I found it difficult to invite her into

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my home. I hesitated for a while then said, "Look, I live alone in this house. I can let you spend the night and I will find somewhere else to sleep." She calmed down and "?said, "Where will you go

I said, "Never mind, I can manage." She said, "Oh, no please, I don't want to trouble you." I stepped outside the door and asked her to enter. I told her that I was leaving the house and that she could stay until morning. At that moment I saw a sudden flash of light, but could not tell its source. I looked around and asked her, "Did you notice "?that sudden light

Yes, perhaps it is from a car's headlights," she replied. Then she said, "But I am" ".afraid I cannot sleep alone in the house

I said, "What do you suggest then?" She said, "I suggest you sleep in your bedroom ".and I sleep in the living room

".I said, "No, you can use my bedroom and I will sleep in the living room

".She said, "Thank you so much

She entered and I went to sleep in the living room that night. Just then I realized that my small recorder was still on. The tape had finished, and I left it in its place as I was quite sleepy. I was worried about the telephone, which was in my bedroom. What if someone calls? Then I dismissed the thought, since it was nearly midnight. At seven a.m. I woke up and saw the



girl waiting for me at the bedroom door. She told me, "Thank you very much for your ".hospitality, but please don't tell anyone about my stay in your house

".I said, "How can I tell anyone? I don't even know your name

".Oh, yes, I am Maryam," she said. I replied indifferently, "Happy to meet you

She left and I returned to my bedroom. I saw cigarette butts lying on the table and noticed that Sarah's picture was no longer in its place. I said to myself, ‘surely this girl knew I did not care for her.' I wondered how freely the girl had behaved in a stranger's house! I changed my clothes and left for the college. There, I saw Sarah walking with some classmates, so I went directly up to her and wished her a good morning, as usual. She answered me in cold tone and went on chatting with the .others, as if I was not there

".What's wrong?", I implored. She replied, "Oh, nothing"

".I asked her, "Have you spent the night reading? You look tired

She gave me a long sad look and then said, "What about you, have you spent it "?reading

I had nearly forgotten everything about the previous night. I said, "Oh, no, I slept ".well

".She gave me a bitter smile and said, "Surely it was a comfortable night

I was about to tell her about the strange visitor, but I remembered my promise to the ,girl not to tell anyone about her. I hesitated, than said, "Oh, no



".it wasn't at all

She looked at me sadly and said, "I hope you will enjoy your future sleep." Then she turned away and left me standing there alone. I tried to see Sarah that afternoon, but she avoided me. The next day I looked for her at the college but I could not find her. I phoned the boarding house, but they told me she was busy. I went to see her at her home, but she wouldn't come out. I returned home feeling quite miserable and I couldn't sleep that night. The next morning, I hurried to the college to see Sarah, but "?when she saw me she turned and walked away. I asked her, "Sarah, are you angry

Yes!" she said angrily. Shocked and dismayed, I sat on a bench as she walked away" without waiting for me to ask her the reason for her anger. I felt like crying and had to return home since I could not pay attention to my lessons that day. I had no idea why she was angry. The incident concerning Maryam came to my mind, but I brushed it .aside, since no one knew about it. I decided to tell Sarah about that girl

The next day I went early to the college, but Sarah did not come. I was at a loss as to what to do. Walking aimlessly through the streets, I remembered the religious alim and decided to visit him to ask about his health. I was in need of



his help. A young child answered my knock, and I asked about the alim. He told me he was well and would receive me. I felt as if I were drowning, without any hope of being saved, and then suddenly a bright light shone, giving me hope. The child looked at me ".and asked, "Why haven't you come together? Sarah was here earlier today

I was surprised to learn that she visited him. "She did not enter, she just asked about .my father's health and left," the boy said

I saw that the alim looked much healthier. We talked about different matters. I was at ease and wished that I could tell him of my trouble but I felt shy. I thought he would talk about Sarah, but he didn't. I asked when our next meeting would be, and he ,looked surprised, then said

Tomorrow afternoon at ۴ o'clock." I thanked him and left directly to phone Sarah and" tell her of the date, but there was no answer. I felt hopeless until I recalled the alim's words of the power and strength of faith. I thought, 'I have a God to worship and to whom I turn to in times of trouble.' Then I remembered that I hadn't finished the book .about religion

I tried to read, but Sarah dominated my thoughts, and I could not understand a word. I closed the book and wrote a few words in the hope that I could give the letter to .Sarah the next morning

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Oh dear Sarah,' the letter said. 'How I wish all the world be against me except you!' After writing the note, I felt better. I thought that everything would be all right once we resumed communication. I got up early the next morning and gave the letter to a friend of Sarah to pass it on to her, but she refused to take it. I thought that she must .have had a good reason for such behaviour, thus I was not angry with her

I spent the day in the college and at the appointed hour, I went to the alim's house and saw Sarah at the door. I walked up and greeted her, but she answered .indifferently. I noticed that she looked pale; as if she hadn't slept the previous night

"?I asked her "Is it really you

She did not reply and I continued, "It is good that we are both attracted to the alim. It ".means we are actually united

She said, "Though we both want to continue our studies, it may not mean we are ".united

I said, "Please Sarah, be kind to me! You know I cannot live without you. You are my ".whole life. Why are you treating me in this way? You know your own feelings

.Whatever I know makes no difference!" she replied"

I said, "But why my dear Sarah? I cannot understand your anger." she was silent then ".said, "You don't want to understand

I said, "Oh, no, I really do. I am ready to listen to whatever you

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".say

In any case, it is the time for our meeting", she replied. She knocked on the door and“ .we both entered

### Chapter Three

As soon as we sat down, the alim asked us if we had read the book he gave us. I felt embarrassed because I had not finished it. Moreover, I felt shy when Sarah answered that she had read it and had written some notes for explanation. She handed him the notebook. He looked pleased and said, "This is a good sign. I will have a look again ".later

He turned towards me, and seeing that I had not answered, he began his lecture, saying, "We previously said the best religion is the one which is in harmony with ”.human instinct. We also discussed belief in the unseen and the unity of the universe

Religion is a matter of choice. Man is free to choose his own religion. It is a doctrine" firmly implanted in the deep inner recesses of the mind. If not, then it will be mere rituals and habits. Thus religion is an individual choice that cannot be made through .compulsion. One cannot be compelled to practice his religion correctly

As for belief, there is no use in compulsion. Man can choose the best religion and can be convinced through discussion. Choosing the right religion with a profound

knowledge of truth and perfect awareness is a matter concerning the individual himself. Hence, religion is a choice based on thought and reasoning. The Holy Qur'an calls for

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:thinking and reasoning, as in these verses

Say: Consider what is it that is in heavens and earth; and signs and warners do not (avail a people who would not believe. (Yunus, ۱۰: ۱۰۱

Do they not then look up to heaven above them, how We have made it and adorned it (and it has no gaps! (Qaf, ۵۰: ۱۶

Throughout the Qur'an, the verses encourage man to think wisely and give the mind" freedom of choice after presenting facts and evidence. In order to make one believe you, you must have sound evidence as a proof. Islam comprises all these aspects in .the Qur'an. It is safe to say that Islam is the only religion that has such a quality

Every religion has been in need of a miracle to prove its authenticity. The miracle of Islam is embodied in the Qur'an's miraculous eloquence. The best, most literate men failed to produce anything equal to it. The Qur'an challenged them to produce its like, :as in this verse

Say, if men and jinn should combine together, to bring the like of the Qur'an, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others. (Chapter Al-(Isra', ۱۷: ۸۸

Then, when they failed, the Qur'an challenged them to produce a few chapters" :themselves

Or, do they say: He has forged it. Say: Then bring ten forged chapters like it and call (upon whom you can besides Allah, if you are truthful. (Hud, ۱۱: ۱۳

When again they failed, they were challenged"

:to produce one more chapter of its like, as in this verse

And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed to Our servant, then produce one chapter of its like, and call your witnesses besides Allah if you are truthful. (Al-Baqarah, ۲:۲۳)

".They failed, despite being masters of language and literature"

Every religion is in need of a message and proof of that message. Islam has both in" the Holy Qur'an. All kinds of sciences, whether social, economic, natural or related to man's biological construction, can be found in the Qur'an. Many a scientific fact has been recently proved in science, though the Holy Qur'an referred to it fourteen .centuries ago

Still other facts have not yet been discovered by science but were revealed to the ,Prophet

who had been illiterate. Islam elaborated various social topics centuries ago. Some have been recognized only recently by the world, such as the 'Human Rights Charter', which states: 'Abolition of slavery, and economic solutions to prevent monopoly and '.exploitation

You can find many similar facts in recently written books on Islam. Islam's message" is independent except regarding its own concepts. In Islam, man is free to choose with dignity. The mind is not imprisoned in ignorance, nor in feelings of humiliation and regret of a sin (referring to the first disobedience of Prophet Adam). Islam does not call for ritual worship only, but also calls man to pay attention to his everyday affairs. In the Holy Qur'an you can see legislations and good



foundation for life. All aspects have been tackled and solutions are applicable anytime and anywhere. Clear evidence of this is found in the Holy Qur'an. Some Chapters are

:named after animals, such as

The Cow, the Bee, the Ant and the Spider. Some refer to natural phenomena and elements such as: The Thunder, The Smoke, The Moon, The Sun, and The Iron; Some refer to political and social stances such as: The Parties, The Faithful, The Counsel and .Women

There are also Chapters that refer to historical events such as Alay-Imran, The" Prophets, Yunus, Hud, Yousuf, Ibrahim, Muhammad, Al-Rum (The Romans), Maryam, and Noah. Others refer to the Hereafter and the Day of Judgment, such as: Al-Haqqa, Waqiah, and Al-Qariah. Some Chapters refer to economic matters, including: The .(Spoils (Anfal) and the Food (Maidah

There are Chapters that refer to morals and good conduct, such as: Abasa (He Frowned), Humazah (The Slanderer) and Al-Mutaffifin (The Defrauders). Other Chapters refer to religious rituals, such as: Al-Hajj and Al-Sajda. In conclusion, we see that ۳۲ Chapters concern living creatures, and natural phenomena, ۲۹ Chapters concern belief and ideologies, ۲۷ refer to social and political stances and ۱۷ concern .history and philosophy

Four Chapters concern behaviour and morals and four concern materialistic and economic subjects, while two only concern religious rituals. Thus we see that Islam is a complete religion that covers all aspects of life. It does not merely link man to his .Creator

On the contrary, it links man to the Almighty by linking

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him to all of humanity. So religion's scope is wide enough to cover all aspects of feelings and behaviour be it struggle for the sake of Allah or a smile in the face of a .brother believer

Islam can meet the physical and spiritual needs of an individual and it is a perfect" religion when it is performed correctly. Islam is in conformity with life and does not

".neglect the other side

The alim ended his lecture, and we fixed a date for the next morning. We bid him farewell and left. Outside the door, I implored Sarah to allow me to accompany her, but she refused. I told her, "But I have something to tell you. You know, my dear, that I cannot tolerate this unfriendly behaviour. Please, tell me what is the matter. I am ".sure there is something very wrong

Sarah replied, "I am going to the boarding house, and I do not want to stay here one ".more minute

.Then, let me walk with you to your home." I told her"

.No, I can walk by myself, as I came by myself," was her response"

"?Then I asked, "But why do you still come to the lectures

She said, "I am interested in the subject. Now I am a person in search of truth for my "!own benefit. What about you? Why do you come? The Truth is clear to you

I said, "It has never been clear to me. I knew nothing about Islam; perhaps even less ".than what you know

Then let us"

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.continue together for the sake of knowledge," she replied

".I said, "And for my sake, dear Sarah

.For your sake!", she exclaimed"

"?Yes, don't I deserve it"

".She slowly answered, "You did deserve such a thing in the past

And now, what has happened to make you change your mind? You know how"

important you are to me. Life is meaningless without you. At least please take this letter from me. Perhaps it will clear up the matter. Please, take it, it won't do you any ".harm. A small lie should not destroy our whole future together

”?She said, "What small lie? A lie that is proved by evidence

If one is quite sure of something, one's confidence cannot be easily shaken", I said," .surprised by her allegation

".She said, "But one sometimes doubts one's feeling

Then one must be frank and reconsider the matter in order to be certain. Why don't" "?you be frank and tell me the source of your anger

".She said, "Give me more time to think

".Please at least promise that you will read the letter"

".I will do that", she told me. "Good-bye for now"

I returned home a bit calmer than before. I picked up the book to finish it, but I put it down again to look among my papers for poem I previously copied from a book of poetry. I had in tended to give it to Sarah, but I could not find it. Moreover, I could not find a photo Sarah had given me at the beginning of our friendship. My own photograph



.was also missing. I used to keep all these in the drawer near my bed

The next morning, I went to college but I didn't see Sarah that day, or the next day. After three days, I met her at the door of the alim's house. Upon seeing me, she knocked on the door and gave me no time to even offer a word of greeting. We entered and were asked to wait for the alim. I was about to speak when she said," "?Mohsen, can you tell me what you saw yesterday

This question of hers was the first line of the missing poem. I wanted to be sure, so I "?said, "What do you mean

,I mean, whom did you see?" she asked. I said"

Whom could refer to many, but I am sure I saw no one but you, though I did not" ".actually see you

She interrupted me angrily, saying, "Please, that's enough. This is not the first time ".you are saying it

"!I said, "But I have not said it to you except now

".She answered, "Yes, but you have said it to someone else

.But you know I don't talk to any girls except you!" I protested"

.Yes, but you can write," she answered"

"?I said, "Can writing be enough

".She said, "Yes, if it is well composed

".Sarah, why don't you be frank and tell me what you are talking about"

She said, "I wish I could be brave enough to speak. In fact, I am afraid, so you should ".be the one to speak

.I said

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".But, I do not know what is the matter yet"

".She said. "Oh, it can't be! You certainly know what is bothering me

Call me stupid or anything, yet I do not know the reason for your anger. I am ready" .to die in order to know it." I replied earnestly

"?She asked, "Then you have not guessed

"!I said, "No, but there is a certain incident I thought of, then put it aside

.What is this particular incident?" she asked"

I started to tell her about the strange girl, but our teacher entered the room at that moment. I stood up and welcomed him absent-mindedly. I decided to tell Sarah about that girl when the lecture ended. I was not ready to lose her on account of a promise to a stranger. The alim apologized for the delay. He asked about our reading and gave .Sarah her notebook with some explanations written in it. Then he began his lecture

## Chapter Four

We have previously stated that Islam is a complete religion. Islam links an individual" with his Creator through various means, whether social, economic, political, or emotional. Hence all of the actions of an individual, however large or small, are in .harmony with Divine Law

Performing prayer, paying zakat (religious tax), refraining from injustice and abandoning all vices are aspects of this religion. Spiritual rituals, such as fasting, create good morals, and giving charity and religious alms can direct the behaviour of a .Muslim and regulate family affairs", the alim ended his lecture

Does worship include an"



.these aspects?" I asked

Yes my son. Islam is a religion broad enough to cover all that I mentioned. Each" aspect is clearly stated. Now we should determine what Islam has achieved in ".showing the norms that can mould a righteous person

"?I asked, "What do you mean by norms

I mean religious instructions", he replied. “Islamic laws are constructive in regard to"

an individual's character, which is shaped with the knowledge that he is an important part of an humanity. Islamic laws take such a fact into consideration, in the interest of the individual as well as the community. Islam forms a comprehensive, unified whole; ".all the parts of which are in harmony with and support each other

Here Sarah asked him to illustrate his point and our teacher said, "For example, gambling and intoxication destroy the human personality, therefore they are forbidden in order to protect both the individual and the society and to prevent the various crimes that result from these two evils. Another example is the religious order ".to observe decent dress and covering with regard to women

Sarah asked eagerly, "I have been anxious to know the reasons for the imposition of ".hijab on women

The alim smiled and replied, "I'll explain why Islam insists that women observe modest dress when in the company of men to whom they are not forbidden in marriage. Islam does not state that woman should be kept hidden from society, it .simply calls for covering her beauty

The word 'hijab' is mentioned in one particular

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Qur'anic verse addressing Muslim believers with regard to dealing with the Prophet's :wives

And when you ask of them any goods, ask of them from behind a curtain;... (Al-... (Ahzab, ٣٣: ٥٣

".This concerns the respect which was due to the wives with such a status"

Then Islam does not require that women be confined behind the walls of their" .homes," Sarah commented

Of course not. A clear indication is in the Qur'anic verse about modest dressing as" :mentioned in Chapter Al-Nur, which states

Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them, surely Allah is aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and not display their ornaments except what appears thereof; and let them wear their head covering over their bossoms and not display their ornaments except to their husbands or their (fathers.. (Al-Nur, ۲۴:۳۰-۳۱

You can see that Islam orders both men and women to cast down their eyes and" guard their private parts. This fact proves that woman is present in the arena; otherwise, there would not have been any need for this Qur'anic order. Men would not .have found it necessary to cast down their looks as well

Sarah nodded approvingly and the alim added, "In the early days of Islam, woman's role in life proved this fact. Women participated in all activities for the sake of religion ,-the first Muslim martyr was a woman: Summayah

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the mother of Ammar Bin Yassir- and women were present in all the battles and wars for the sake of Islam. They nursed the wounded, supplied water for the soldiers and gave them courage. In fact, the call for Islamic modest dressing is in tended as a ".protective measure to keep the society, of which woman is a part, safe

"?I asked, "How

He answered, "It is a well known fact that a woman possesses attraction and can excite a man's innate feelings, to such a degree that he may come to a crucial crossroad; either he responds or restrains these feelings. In both cases, a man may seriously suffer. A free release of his emotions, without regard to religion or social conduct means sexual chaos and the destruction of families and social tragedies. Statistics in countries that encourage sexual freedom prove this fact. Such statistics .show a high incidence of rape and other forms of sexual abuse

In Sweden, some researchers discovered that ۱۵٪ of the Swedish population is"

unwell psychologically and that a large percentage of that country's income is spent trying to cure them. This is the result of sexual freedom in one of the Western countries. A report issued by the American Association of Family Services stated that the breakdown of the family in the U.S. has reached epidemic proportions and is a major social problem. Every

year, divorce separates one million people. The U.S. divorce rate has increased rapidly, as has the number of illegitimate children. Such facts are

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".the result of sexual freedom

On the other hand, if man restrains his feelings, then he may suffer physical and" psychological disorders. Restraint in the presence of exciting beauty is difficult for many men. We can relate that to exposing a hungry man to a sumptuous banquet. The delicious aroma of food arises his appetite, and yet he is forced to stay away from the food. He may obey, but we cannot remove or change his desire to eat. The display of feminine beauty in front of a male will certainly awaken his innate desires. The best way to protect society and avoid a harmful reaction is for women to cover their ".beauty. Thus woman, as well as man, can avoid harmful consequences

Sarah said, "Then observation of decent dress is a precautious step to the interest of society." The alim said, "Yes, it is like that. Moreover it is to the interest of a female to keep herself from turning into a cheap commodity devoured by the hungry looks of ".men

Sarah commented, "But I have heard that the covering of a woman is a Persian ".tradition that mingled with Muslim tradition

The alim said, "Covering and decent dress are legislated by Islam years prior to Islamic conquest in Persia. Moreover, the decent dress mentioned in Islam is different ".from the Persian tradition

".Sarah added, "I have also heard that it was imposed for economic reasons

The alim asked, "What do you mean?" She answered, "That man wanted to enslave woman and exploit her, hence



he imprisoned her in the house for his own advantage."

The alim said, "This is not the case in Islam. Islamic legislations guarantee the woman's rights in full. She keeps as her own what she gets by work. The Qur'anic verse states:

...men shall have the benefit of what they earn; and women shall have the benefit of what they earn...) Al-Baqara, ۲: ۳۲)

Man cannot benefit from her work since she is the owner of her property. By the way, such a right has only recently been granted to the European woman, who used to get half wages a man received for the same work."

Then Sarah raised another question. She said, "In regard to hijab, has it anything to do with self-denial?"

The alim answered, "In Islam, there is no such thing!"

Here for the first time, I exposed my being a Muslim, so I said, "The Prophet of Islam says: There is no monkery in Islam."

The alim smiled and said, "Here is a Muslim who knows such a fact, there is also a Qur'anic verse in this regard:

...and (as for) monkery they innovated it, We did not prescribe it to them... (Al-Hadid, ۵۷: ۱۹-۲۵)

In Islamic history it is related that one of the Companions wanted to spend all his time for the worship of Allah, so he gave up all earthly pleasures, including his wife. The wife complained to the Prophet (SAW), who was annoyed at the husband's behaviour. He went to the mosque, got on the pulpit and warned his Companions, saying:

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Three matters have been made enjoyable to me in this life: all that is good, women“ ".and my beloved prayer

Sarah asked another question, "What is the status of woman in Islam? Has she the "?same rights as man

The alim told us, "She has equal rights, but they are not identical to man's. Similarity is impossible, while equality is justice. Women's rights in Islam are no less than man's rights with due consideration of the differences between men and women. Imagine that a wealthy man who owns many properties wants to divide his wealth among his .sons

He will surely consider their qualifications and give the fertile land to the one interested in farming; business management to the one interested in business, and so on. The man is aware that his sons will get equal shares, though not similar. In regard ”.to woman, she has the right to work and keep her earnings for herself

She will be rewarded for her good deeds and punished for bad deeds in the" hereafter, the same as man. Man and woman follow the same life course towards Allah, the Almighty. They have equal rights in the Divine Legislations. I will list some books about this subject which should help you understand more about Islam and ".women's rights

I'll read them," Sarah said. "Another question I have is this: Does Islam consider" woman (Eve) as the source of all evil, and that she tempted Adam to eat the forbidden "?fruit

He replied, "Absolutely not. Islam does not blame

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woman for this disobedience. When the Holy Qur'an narrates the story of disobedience it refers to them both suffering from the trick of Satan. The Qur'anic

:verses state

And We said: Oh, Adam dwell you and your wife in the garden; so eat from where you desire, but do not go near this tree, for then you will be of the unjust. But Satan made an evil suggestion to them that he might make manifest to them what had been hidden from them of their evil inclinations and he said: Your Lord has not forbidden you this tree except that you may not both become two angels or that you may not .become immortals

And he swore to them both; Most surely I am a sincere advisor to you. Then he caused them to fall by deceit, so when they tasted of the tree, their evil inclinations became manifest to them and they both began to cover themselves with the leaves of the garden and their Lord called out to them: "Did I not forbid you both from that tree (and say, to you that Satan is your open enemy?" (Al-Araf, ٧: ١٩-٢٢

You see, they were both exposed to temptation and they both succumbed. Eve alone" ".is not accused of the first disobedience

Then Sarah said, "They say woman was created from man and for the sake of man. "?What does Islam say in this regard

The alim said, “This is not correct either. Almighty Allah could have created man without any innate

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desire for woman. Yet Allah created woman as an independent creature whose :existence is related to man, just as his is related to her. The Qur'an says

they (women) are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them...(Al-Baqara, ٢:... (١٨٧

:Another verse states

He has created you from a single being then made its mate of the same (kind)." (Al- (Zumar, ٣٩: ۶

Sarah's final question concerned children, and if Islam considered woman just as .means for producing children

The alim said, "Islam gives the mother a supreme status and grants her full rights to her children in addition to recognizing the important role a mother has with regard to bearing and raising her children. Islam has confirmed through the Prophet (SAW) that Paradise is reached through a mother's satisfaction. Hence, Allah's pleasure stems ".from a mother's pleasure

Then it was time for the evening prayer, so we asked the alim to schedule the next meeting. We left the house and stood outside for a few moments. I saw a couple of men who were walking by admire Sarah and I felt quite annoyed for the first time. She was also bothered by their looks and bid me farewell, although I pleaded with her to stay and talk with me. She stopped a taxi, got in, and left me at the roadside broken-.hearted

I was excited and did not know what to do. I walked along the streets, bought the books recommended by the alim and returned home exhausted, both spiritually and physically. I started

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reading and gradually I felt better. I never ceased thinking of Sarah, who was not only .a dear friend, but my whole life

## Chapter Five

I spent the days waiting for the meeting on that day. I reached the alim's house before Sarah. After she arrived, he began by saying, "Today we shall elaborate on the constructive ethics of Islam. For example Islam has forbidden Muslims to pray on any .usurped property

This has two dimensions: The first is related to a special aspect; the second to a common one. The special aspect is linked to worshipping. Prayer is the most important ritual in Islam. In prayer, an individual's spirit is released from this earthly

world. Man reaffirms his submission to the Almighty Allah. Hence his prayer should be sincere and pure and at a place unusurped by suppression ۶r injustice. So, when one's soul is clean, his prayer is also clean. But if he prays on usurped land, he will either be ".angry at the injustice or satisfied with it. Both cases spoil his prayer

As for the common aspect, the refusal to pray at a usurped place means" denouncement of injustice. Thus private property, which is a human right is ".protected

Here a question came to my mind so I asked, "Why has the Chapter Fatiha (Opening "?of the Book) been chosen to be read during all the daily prayers

He replied, "Al-Fatiha comprises all the Islamic doctrines. Praising the Creator, glorifying Him, obedience to Him, monotheism, belief in the Day of



Judgment and the creature's constant plea for guidance. This Chapter is rich with ".ethics

.Why do the last three verses only address Almighty Allah?" I asked"

He said, "In order for man to comprehend that his prayer is for his own benefit, and not for Allah. Man will benefit spiritually, ideologically and mentally from regular ".prayers

Then I said, "By the way, a verse of the prayer prohibits indecency and evil, yet many ".who pray do commit such unallowed actions

:Yes, prayer prohibits evil as the Qur'an says"

and keep up prayers, surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil...... ((Al-'Ankabut, ۲۹: ۴۵

But it does not prevent man forcibly from committing evil. It preaches and supplies" man with ways to keep him away from indecency. Yet it is up to him to accept this and

behave accordingly. Some understand the essence of prayer and avoid evil practices. .Some do not comprehend this concept and hence behave otherwise

The Prophet (SAW) says in this regard: “You gain nothing from your prayer but what ".you comprehend

".I said, "Now I understand that all worship is for man's benefit

That's right", he said. "If you take a look at the Qur'an, you will understand that all" Islamic laws have humanitarian aspects. Its message is not confined to one particular ".country, race or class. This religion has come as mercy to the whole universe

In the Holy Qur'an, there are upstanding examples indicating that Islamic laws can" cause a righteous person to be followed in society. All individuals are responsible in

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society. A hadith states: 'You are all shepherds and are responsible for your flocks.' Every individual is given the chance to construct his personality and participate in .society

The difference is great between a society nurtured on selfishness and idleness and a society based on both personal and communal responsibilities. Laws give responsibility and cause him to know his moral duties. The Prophet (SAW) says: 'I have been sent to uphold good morals. The best of you in faith is the one who is the most " '.well-behaved

Our teacher looked at his watch and our time was over, so we bid him farewell and .left

Outside the door, I noticed that Sarah kept her head covering on which was not her habit. I tried to talk to her but she quickly handed me a letter and left at once. I was about to open it and read it, but I prepared to read it at home, so I hurried back and :read the following

,Mohsen

Assalamu Alaikum

I hesitated before I wrote this letter. The situation has become so serious that it has affected my own life. I have expected many things, but not that which has happened. Why have you betrayed your promises? Why have you weakened so much as to ?consider our relation indifferently

You have destroyed our hopes for the future. I think you know what I mean. You will find with this letter, clear evidence in addition to the fact that I have myself heard .about what you have done

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.Anyway, I don't want to keep a token of your insincerity

You must be sure that I have suffered a lot. Had it not been for this new light of Islam that engulfs my heart, my suffering might have destroyed me. Be sure that when I give up your love, I am not turning to anyone else, because you are the only one I .love

Sarah

In the other envelope I found the missing photos of Sarah and me as well as the poem that I had intended to give to Sarah. There was also a photograph of me welcoming .the strange girl into my house. Everything became clear

I was the victim of a well-designed conspiracy. I had been a fool. Sarah's cousin had prepared all the drama. Surely Sarah had been informed of the incident as soon as the girl came to my door. I felt sure she had phoned and heard the girl's voice in my .bedroom. I felt dizzy. I made up my mind to fight for my girl

I immediately left the house to find Sarah, but stopped when I realized it would be difficult for me to prove my innocence. I returned home quite desperate. My eyes fell on the Holy Qur'an, which I always kept on the bookshelf. Feeling it was my only hope .I opened it and read a few Chapters, after which I felt a bit relieved

Then, suddenly, I remembered my recorder and the tape on which the incident was recorded. At last I



had some evidence to prove my innocence.۱ decided to give the tape to Sarah the .next day. I praised Allah for His bounties and slept soundly that night

The next morning I looked for Sarah in the college, but I could not find her. Her friends told me that she had left for her hometown. I was surprised, since it was not a holiday. .The days passed by, and whenever I asked about Sarah, I was told she was still away

On the day of our next meeting with the religious alim, I took the tape and wrote a .letter explaining every detail to Sarah. J hoped to see Sarah there, and I did

I was surprised to see her wearing black clothes and a black scarf. My love was so .great that I wished no man but me would ever see her

Pointing to her black dress, I asked, "It is nice to see you again, but why are you "?mourning

Her eyes filled with tears as she told me, "My father has died." I was saddened by the news and felt like crying. I expressed my condolences and said, "We are all from Allah and to Allah we return." I kept silent and she turned to the alim and said, "Please start your lecture. I have a lot of things to do, but I wanted to come and hear you. Despite my sadness, I have read the books you recommended. I consider Islam to be an ".important part of my life

,The alim replied



May Allah bless you, my daughter. I pray to Him to give you patience and reward you" well for your righteous feelings and desire to pursue the truth. You have made it easy ".for me by reading those books

She said, "Had I not a wish to hear from you more and more, I would have told you that I am quite satisfied with what I have learnt from you. I am anxious to hear about ".the good examples of Muslims throughout Islamic history

The alim told us, "No legislations or ideas can be successful unless examples exist. Otherwise, it would be impractical. Islam presents the Prophet (SAW) as a good :example to be followed. The Qur'an reads

Certainly you have in the Apostle of Allah an excellent example far for him who hopes (in Allah and the Last day and remembers Allah much. (Al-Ahzab, ۳۳: ۲۱

To talk about the Prophet alone would take months. Other examples are his cousin," Imam Ali (AS), and the eleven Imams (AS) .You can read many books about these great men. There are also other Islamic characters in history known for their righteousness such as: Salman Farsi, Ammar Bin Yassir, Abu Dhar Al-Ghaffari and Maitham al-Tammar. When you read the books about these Muslims, we shall hold a ".final meeting, by the will of Allah

We thanked him and left. I asked Sarah to stay and listen to something important I ,had to tell her. I said

I'II prove to you that I have always been faithful to"



".you and I am quite innocent

"?She looked surprised and said, "How will you prove your innocence

" !I said, "Oh, I'll tell you everything, but not at the roadside

"? Where then"

.Any place you suggest," I said"

She thought for a moment and said, "There is no better place than the alim's house.

".Since he is our spiritual father, we can discuss the matter in his presence

At that moment the alim appeared at the door; he was on his way out. Upon seeing us still there he was surprised, so we told him our problem and he invited us back to the same room in his house. He apologized for not being able to stay, but he promised to .return soon

We entered the room, and I found myself feeling very shy, despite my great love for Sarah, I could not even look at her. I kept silent for a while then from the depth of my heart the words poured out. I explained everything to her. She listened to me attentively. Truth and sincerity were obvious in my voice and manner, and she believed me without even asking for proof. I asked her, "Don't you want any proof of "? what I said

".No. I believe you all the same. Thank God you are now more truthful than before"

I said, "But I do want you to listen to this tape on which details of the event are ".recorded

".She said, "Oh, no, I do trust you. There is no need for it

,I insisted, saying, "Please

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".at least keep it for yourself

.Okay, I will take it just to please you." she agreed"

When the alim returned, he was delighted to see that our problem was solved. We both thanked him and left, feeling greatly at ease, a feeling that we had missed for so long. We read all the books he told us to read. The more we read about Islam, the .more surprise I felt at my great ignorance of my own religion

As for Sarah, she was careful to observe hijab. We both started our daily prayer at their fixed times. When we finished the books, I phoned the alim for a meeting at the

.soonest opportunity. When we visited him, he asked us if we had read those books

We both answered "yes". Then he asked, "Have you acquired good knowledge of Islam and its righteous exemplars?" I replied for both of us, "yes". We wish we could ".follow in their footsteps

Then the alim said to Sarah, "Now, my daughter if you are convinced, you can become ".a Muslim

. I said, "Please, Seyyed, I would like to become a Muslim also

"?'He asked in amazement, 'you

Yes. I must become a Muslim, since I knew nothing of Islam except in name. "The" alim looked at me in the eyes and said, "But you need not repeat the Shahada (testimony that Allah is One and Muhammad is His Apostle); it is enough for you to ".have true faith in Islam in words and deeds

I replied confidently, "I have

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".true faith

.Are you ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of Islam?" he asked"

".I said, "Yes, everything

.Give me an example." he said"

I looked at Sarah and told him, "Had I not known that Sarah has become a Muslim believer, I would have decided not to marry her, although she is the most precious ".thing in my life

"?He turned to Sarah and said, "And you, my daughter

She said, "I feel the same way. I would not accept Mohsen as a husband if he were

".not a Muslim, even though he is very dear to me

The alim then said, “Allah bless you both and guide you to His pleasure in being ".righteous seed for a righteous generation

Sarah then gave her testimony to the alim .He gave her a golden-lettered Qur'an as a gift. We left him feeling as if we were a newly-born couple. Soon we married and lived happily. We named our first child after the alim as a token of our gratitude and .esteem

Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness [whence he cannot come forth ? ... [Al-An’am, ۶: ۱۲۳

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## About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ
?Are those who know equal to those who do not know
al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction
Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto
Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers

in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-
Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks
Holding virtual educational courses for the public-
Holding virtual teacher-training courses-
Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website
Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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